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of the educational aim of every enlightened school community and because it presents many valuable suggestions of effective procedure.

Supervision tested.—A most convincing discussion of the effectiveness of supervision and its practicability for rural schools is given in the account[1] of an experiment with rural school supervision in Brown County, South Dakota. The experiment was designed, first, to determine quantitatively the effect of supervision and, second, to determine the practicability of supervision for rural schools.

In the first chapter, the problem, the method, and the results are stated. Specifically, the problem is to determine the effect of supervision, using the "Zone Plan." The method used is that of equivalent groups. Two groups, whose equivalence is determined or whose differences are ascertained and allowed for, are compared in their abilities to perform certain work. It is found that the children in the supervised schools advanced 194 per cent as far as those in the unsupervised schools. In chapter ii, it is shown that the conditions under which the experiment took place were sufficiently rigorous to insure reliable results. In chapter iii, the equivalence of the two groups is dealt with, and it is shown that there is not sufficient difference to alter these results materially. The plan of supervision is as follows: the supervisor divides his entire supervisory district into territorial units, confining his activities to one such unit for a week, passing to the next area the next week, etc. The purpose of this territorial organization is to "provide for systematic supervision of classroom instruction, for convenient, effective, and democratic teachers' meetings, and for the development of a community consciousness on the part of rural communities with a view to inspiring and facilitating more effective social, educational, and commercial action" (p. 19). This plan of supervision implies a calendar of major events for the entire year. The program used during the period of the study is given, and the supervisory activities engaged in are shown in considerable detail.

The success of the plan is attributed in a considerable degree to the fact that the supervisor inspired and took part in community activities. The reasons for these activities and a description of them are given in chapter v.

While the main object of the study was to secure quantitative evidence concerning supervision, it is also shown that certain factors which condition school work but which do not lend themselves to measurement were benefited by the supervision. For example, it is shown that the interests of the parents were stimulated, and an increase in the professional spirit of the teachers was evident. These features are described in chapter vi. The statistical evidence is presented in chapter vii.

A discussion of the results and the supervisory devices through which they were secured is given in chapter viii, while the application of the principles of

[1] MARVIN SUMMERS PITTMAN, *The Value of Supervision*. Baltimore: Warwick & York, 1921. Pp. x+129.

the zone plan is given in chapter ix. This deals with topics such as the sphere of the supervisor and how he should organize his time and shows how the use of local talent, publicity, and such agencies may be enlisted for the success of a like understanding.

The work is valuable in that it demonstrates a workable plan for rural-school supervision at reasonable cost. It might profitably be used by district, county, and state superintendents in obtaining financial aid for supervisory undertakings. Moreover, it shows by objective evidence that supervision of elementary subjects produces results sufficient to justify the cost.

Modern History.—Though the author of a new book[1] on United States history does not indicate the design of his work, it may be inferred that he is seeking to serve the busy intelligent citizen who desires to be informed as to the general trend of affairs in his country since 1877. He probably has in mind, also, the large undergraduate classes of the colleges and universities of the country and possibly the reference shelf of the best high schools.

The style, which is simple, lively, and forceful, and the general scope of the book are in a measure adapted to any or all of these purposes. The author provides numerous bibliographical notes, which reveal an unusual knowledge of the sources of the period, and a more exhaustive index than is usually found in works of this nature. The book includes discussions of literature, ideals, sports, amusements, and many other topics not ordinarily found in historical texts; it contains useful and interesting information which it would be difficult to find elsewhere. To the style, to the content, and to the mechanical aids one will find little objection.

The method of treatment is somewhat disappointing, however. It might have been hoped that a man of Professor Paxson's equipment would present the unfolding of several of the outstanding and characteristic movements of the last half-century in such a way as to leave in the mind of the ordinary layman a definite conception of the trend of the times. Instead of this, one finds that he has rigidly adhered to the chronological order, presenting fifty-seven chapters the headings of which do not always give a definite idea of the topics discussed. As a result, no single movement is given a complete, consecutive treatment, and the historical novice at least must be left in considerable confusion, Careful students of the recent history of the United States, like Professor Paxson, doubtless have noted certain well-defined processes, movements, and tendencies, such as the growth of large-scale industries and of organized labor; the struggle between capital and labor; the reform movement which has attempted to free politics from the undue influence of big business, and to apply scientific methods to governmental administration; the transition from an individualistic to a socialized democracy, accompanied by the enlargement of the powers of the state; the growing interest in and influence

[1] FREDERIC L. PAXSON. *Recent History of the United States.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1921. Pp. xii+603.